

Mayor's Message

The fire season is upon us. In the past couple of months, there have been a number of brush and structural fires in the area, including a large one just east of Hurricane City that threatened homes in the area. The entire region of the country is extremely dry and hot; much of it (including the entire state of Utah) is currently under a "Red Flag Warning" for fire danger; and fire fighters are currently fighting huge fires in Colorado and New Mexico. The Virgin River drainage was blessed with a lot of rain and snow last year, resulting in an abundance of weeds and grasses that are excellent fuel for brush fires. Statewide, we are currently experiencing one of the driest Junes on record; and the forecast is for continued hot and dry weather. Even if it rains, lightning may become a significant problem for the tinder-dry vegetation that abounds.

Last year, the State Legislature expanded the fireworks season and potency of fireworks that are legal in this State. This year, the Legislature cut back the season to its shortened pre-2011 timeframes, but left in place the allowed fireworks (including some aerial fireworks). Fire conditions have prompted the State and Federal governments to impose heavy restrictions on fireworks, fires, and fire-producing conditions. Several municipalities have largely curbed or even prohibited the use of fireworks this year. And one major retailer in the State has voluntarily determined to not sell any type of aerial fireworks this year, whether they are legal or not.

Earlier this year, the State Forester declared heavy fire restrictions for State and private lands in Washington County, prohibiting, among other things, the use of fireworks. The restrictions have been expanded and now apply to such lands statewide, including lands lying adjacent to LaVerkin. Concerned for the safety of the person and property of our residents and businesses, the City Council has declared, by resolution, a Stage Two Restriction on the use of fireworks this year.

Until further notice, the only location within the city limits of LaVerkin where you may discharge fireworks is Wanlass Park [i.e., the City-owned park lands located between Main and Street streets, and between 300 and 500 North], and only

- (1) between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 a.m. (midnight) on July 4 and July 24;
- (2) between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., on July 1-3, July 5-7, July 21-23, and July 25-27;
- (3) between the hours of 11:00 a.m. on December 31 and 1:00 a.m. on January 1; and
- (4) between the hours of 11:00 a.m. on February 9, 2013 and 1:00 a.m. of February 10, 2013 (the eve and day of the Chinese New Year).

Any use of fireworks shall be reasonable and prudent, and with due regard for the safety of others and their property; and shall comply with all applicable State and local laws and ordinances. Additionally, with the support of the City Council, I have signed and issued a Mayor's Proclamation which encourages, promotes, and urges voluntary compliance-within the city limits of LaVerkin City with the restrictions, rules, and guidelines set forth in the State Forester's Closed Fire Season Proclamation and Fire Restriction Order, and the Department of Natural Resource's guidelines for campfires at "permanently improved places of habitations".

A copy of the Council's resolution, my Proclamation, and the State's Closed Fire Season Proclamation, Fire Restriction Order, and campfire guidelines can be accessed at this website or at the City Offices. Within the next month, we will be celebrating the Fourth of July and Pioneer Day. Please be wise in your

use of fireworks - to avoid igniting any fires that might cause injury or damage; do not discharge fireworks outside of an approved designated location (and certainly not from moving vehicles, on hillsides, or near dry vegetation); never use illegal fireworks; and always think **SAFETY**. And be aware that noise ordinances remain in *effect* and that fireworks may not be discharged after dark except as noted above. Also, be careful with barbecues and campfires , the discharge of firearms, and cutting, welding or grinding metal, as well as where you smoke and dispose of cigarette butts.

Feel free to contact the City with any questions you may have regarding fire and fireworks related activities; and watch our website and public notices (or call the City) to be advised of any adjustments in restrictions which may occur as a result of changing conditions. Be careful, and have a great summer!

Karl Wilson, Mayor